



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA STATE TREASURER PHIL ANGELIDES

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TREASURER ANGELIDES PRAISES NEW LEGISLATION ALLOWING HYBRID CARS TO USE CALIFORNIA'S CARPOOL LANES

California Law Sponsored by Angelides Takes Effect with Today's Enactment of Federal Transportation Bill

SACRAMENTO, CA – California State Treasurer Phil Angelides today hailed legislation that makes hybrid and other advanced technology vehicles eligible – even with a single occupant – to use California's high-occupancy vehicle (HOV or carpool) lanes. The California law, sponsored by Angelides, went into effect with enactment of the federal transportation bill, which was approved by Congress last week and signed into law today.

"California is ready to put hybrid cars in the fast lane. With gas prices at near-record levels and increasing concern over our nation's dependence on foreign sources of oil, California has taken an important step toward reducing our fuel consumption, as well as clearing our air. I applaud the California congressional representatives who pushed for federal approval so that states may open their carpool lanes to the cleanest and most fuel-efficient vehicles, which will encourage automakers to make more of these gas- and cost-saving efficient cars available to consumers."

Treasurer Angelides has long led the push to open carpool lanes to hybrids in California. In 2003, Treasurer Angelides first proposed that the California Department of Transportation, under former Director Jeff Morales, and the U.S. Department of Transportation allow hybrids access to carpool lanes.

Treasurer Angelides sponsored the California hybrid legislation, Assembly Bill 2628 authored by Assemblymember Fran Pavley (D-Agoura Hills), which became law in September 2004. Because federal funds are used in the construction of California's carpool lanes, the state law required federal approval in order to take effect. That approval was secured today when the President signed the transportation bill that includes a measure allowing states to open their carpool lanes to fuel-efficient hybrid vehicles.

Under the California law, which expires on January 1, 2008, the Department of Motor Vehicles is authorized to issue up to 75,000 permits to hybrid and advanced technology vehicles that meet emissions standards and achieve fuel efficiency standards of 45 miles per gallon or higher. Under the law, the hybrid vehicles eligible for HOV access today include the Honda Insight, Honda Civic Hybrid and Toyota Prius. As new hybrid and other advanced-technology vehicles are developed, they too will become eligible for HOV access if they meet the emissions and fuel efficiency standards.

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